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6 busted eco myths



Does it really matter if you don't recycle
or if you throw your food waste away
instead of composting it?
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Provided by Earth911.com

Now that April (aka Earth Month), is in full swing, it's the perfect time to get moving with your eco-fabulous resolutions.

But the prospect of where to begin can be daunting, especially when you factor in the myths floating around about reasons *not* to shift your behavior towards that which is more eco-conscious. So enjoy Earth Month to its fullest and don't be fooled by these six eco-myths.

Myth #1: Organic and recycled products are hard to find.

While this may have been true several years ago, even big-box stores like Walmart and Target are stocking up on organic and recycled goods.

You don't even have to visit a food co-op or natural market to get your fix of sustainable goodies, as almost every grocery store now has an extensive organic selection.

What's more, Web sites such as [Green America's National Green Pages](#) have listings for everything from sustainably produced clothing to socially responsible mutual funds.

Myth #2: Too many choices make it difficult to get educated about sustainability.

Certification is not just for organic anymore. There are several organizations that offer screenings and certifications for environmentally and socially responsible producers.

In addition to [Green America's Seal of Approval](#), which requires companies to undergo a vigorous screening process, there is the [Forest Stewardship Council](#), which reviews the business practice of paper and wood producers. [TransFair USA](#) certifies that products like coffee are produced under fair trade conditions, and of course, the USDA has stringent regulations on products that are carry the organic label.

In order to stay up on the latest news and understand the latest green lingo, follow a few of your favorite eco-conscious Web sites. Also, remember that a quick web search can answer almost any of your questions about getting the most out of your greening efforts.

For more information on what all of those regulations and labels actually mean check out our [Top 10 Green Labels Guide](#).

Myth #3: Recycling and reduction is inconvenient.

As our society begins to view trash as a potential resource rather than a nuisance, more and more municipalities are instituting curbside pickup options so residents can recycle everything from metal to food scraps.

Even if your municipality doesn't accept a recyclable item it in its regular curbside pickup (think

televisions, cell phones or batteries), you can easily locate a local drop-off center. Check out [Earth911](#) to find out what to do with those tough-to-recycle items.

As for reduction, your efforts can range from the simple – taking reusable bags to the grocery store, using a refillable water bottle, buying items with little or no packaging or taking shorter showers – to the complex – buying nothing for a week, shopping exclusively at secondhand stores or [crafting new items out of old ones](#). For further inspiration, check out the [No Impact Man](#) or [The Story of Stuff](#).

Myth #4: One person can't make a difference.

Does it really matter if you don't recycle or if you throw your food waste away instead of composting it? Yes. Much of what is in our landfills could have been reborn as a new product had it been reused. According to the EPA, 63.9 percent of what goes into landfills is paper, plastic, metal and glass.

An additional 44.8 million tons of food scraps and yard waste resides there as well, and the rotting organic matter in landfills turns into methane, one of the most potent global warming gasses.

With natural resources dwindling and climate change looming, it is more important than ever to utilize and support strong recycling infrastructures, while at the same time looking for creative ways to transform our trash into new stuff.

Myth #5: Going green is too expensive.

Putting aside the obvious joy of reducing your overall footprint, many steps that you take towards this goal will also help you to save money.

Reducing the number of times per week you drive, turning down the heat or air conditioning a few degrees and reducing the amount of water you use can all add up to big savings on your bills.

On the culinary front, if you decide to compost your food waste and grow your own food, your grocery bill for that organic meal will drop significantly too.

Also, it's important to take a whole-systems view when analyzing the cost of products you buy.

While many eco-friendly products are more expensive up front, consider that your purchase is supporting sustainable and oftentimes your local economy.

Plus, given all of the money you are going to save with your reduction efforts, your budget should still come out in the black!

Need more proof with some hard numbers? Check out our [8 Ways to Go Green and Save Hundreds](#).

Myth #6: Recycled and all-natural products are lower quality.

It is true that certain materials, such as paper, do gradually downcycle; however, as paper nears the end of its life (after five to seven cycles), pulp that is too small to be used ends up being filtered out of the machines and becomes waste.

When plastic downcycles, it is simply used to make lower-quality products. Today's Tupperware might be tomorrow's traffic cone. In the case of other materials, there is no loss of quality. Glass melts down to glass, and metal to metal (so long as the metal is pure). In these instances, there

is virtually no difference between recycled or "virgin" products, such as bottles or sheet metal.

When it comes to food, the proof lies in the taste. Anyone who has eaten a giant, tasteless tomato will tell you that making something bigger isn't the same as making it better.

Natural farming methods, aside from keeping food free of pesticide and chemical fertilizer residues, often result in a smaller, but more flavorful harvest. Products made through natural processes have the added health benefit of reducing air and water pollution (byproducts of chemical manufacturing), and everyone can benefit from a better quality of life as a result.

Read more

[8 Ways to Not Get Tricked While Going Green](#)



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